

Maloney Reservoir

2011 Fall Survey Summary



Jared Lorensen, Fisheries Biologist

Lake Maloney is the second canal reservoir downstream from Lake McConaughy. This reservoir is utilized for regulation of water used in the NPPD North Platte Hydro Facility. Lake Maloney offers unique fishing opportunities as a result of this functionality. Notice these aspects at http://www.nppd.com/assets/public_recreation.pdf and water depth contours at <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/fishing/programs/lakemapping/pdfs/maloney.pdf>.

Notice fishing regulation changes in the 2011-2012 Fishing Guide at this link <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/Fishing/guides/fishguide/pdf/FishGuide.pdf> or pick up a print copy at your local vendor or NGPC office.

Every fall the fishery at Lake Maloney is sampled using experimental gill nets, a method commonly used to sample fish found primarily in open water, such as walleye, white bass, channel catfish and hybrid striped bass. These nets are made of clear monofilament mesh strung between a weighted line and a floating line. This mesh ranges in size from $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch to 3 inches and the nets are typically set perpendicular to the shoreline in 6 to 12 feet of depth during late afternoon with an orange floating buoy on the ends to deter boats from being entangled and for ease of retrieval. Gill nets create an invisible wall in the water column that fish cannot sense so they are entangled by their gills as they attempt to move through.

Data collected from these surveys allow biologists to evaluate the population density, size structure, and growth rates for several species. This data provides valuable information to guide decision making scenarios that include fish species stocked, stocking rates and fishing regulations. This information also assists Game and Parks staff in guiding anglers to waterbodies that have the desired populations for fishing.

The following text and graphs are the result of the 2011 gill netting survey at Lake Maloney. Graphs represent number of each species captured per gill net by length group. For comparative purposes it also shows results from previous years.

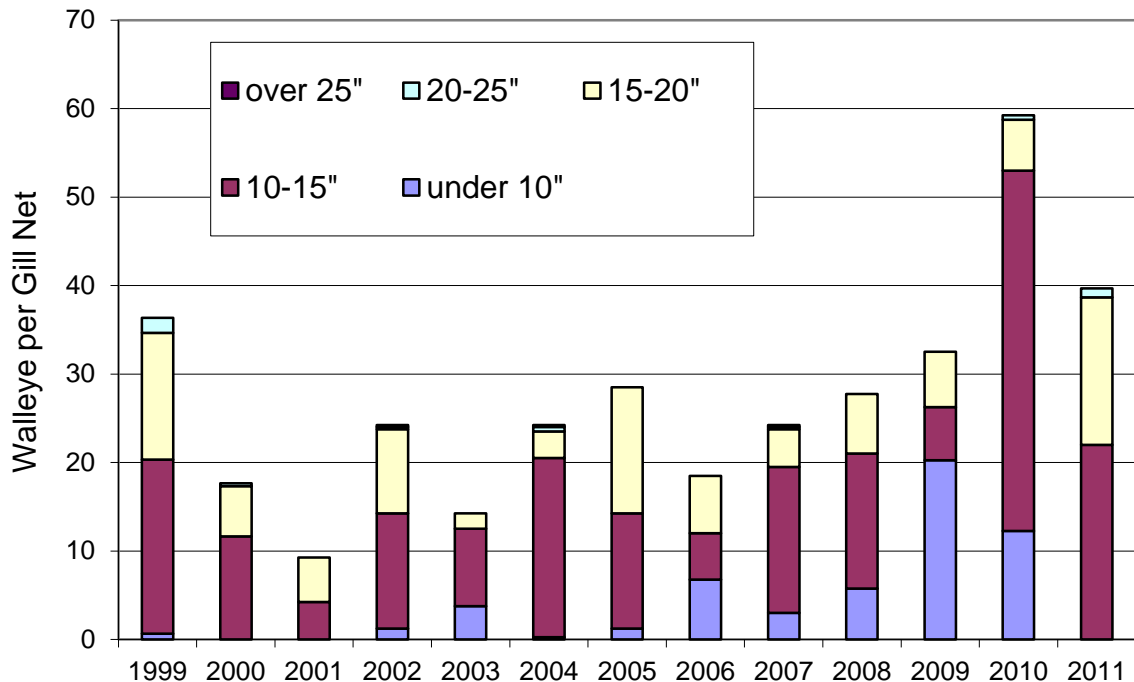
If you have questions or concerns about the fishery of Lake Maloney please contact

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OR

Brad Newcomb, District Mgr. 308-865-5330, brad.newcomb@nebraska.gov

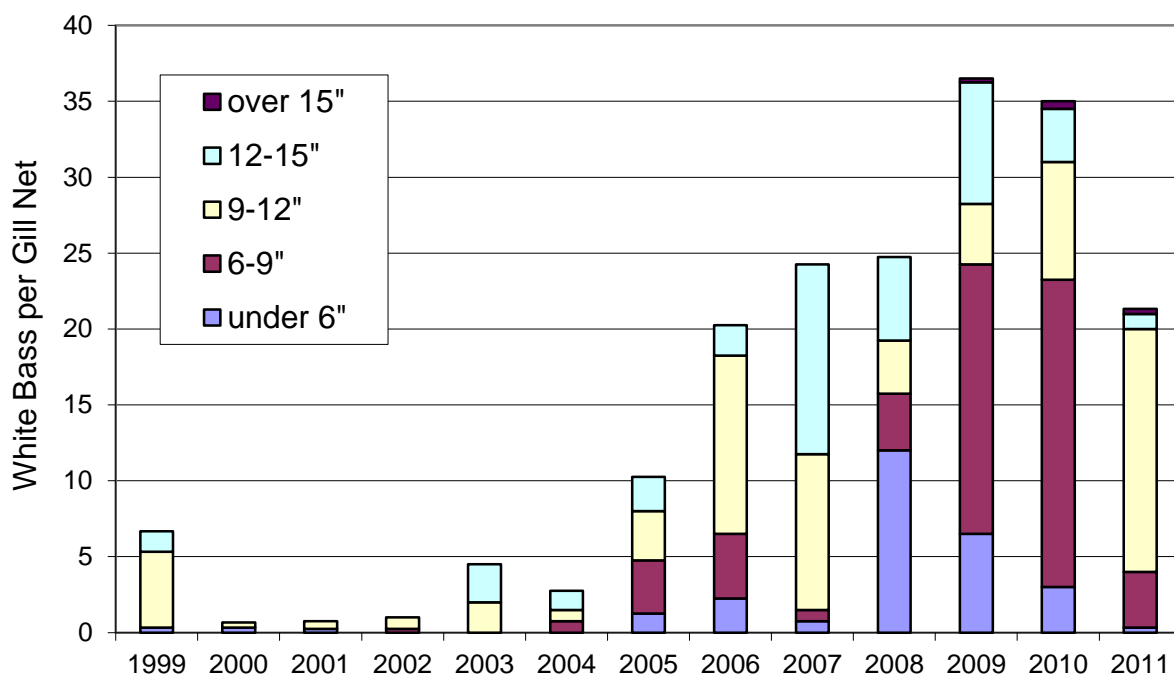
Walleye



Lake Maloney should be one of the best places to catch walleye in Southwest Nebraska in 2012. The large quantity of 10-15" walleye sampled in 2010 are still present but they are now 15-20". The 2011 sample of walleye indicated the largest size structure observed in over ten years with 65% over the legal length (15"). In 2011, 42,831 walleye fingerlings were stocked and a similar stocking will be requested for 2012. Although these stockings occur annually, the high water condition in the canal system is likely playing a role in walleye density.



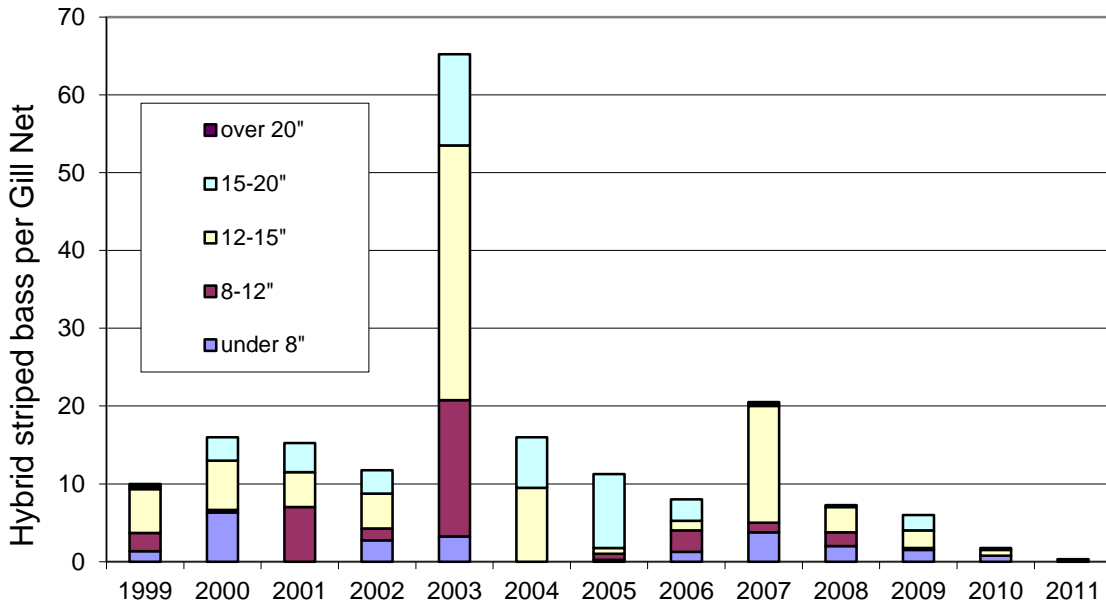
White bass



Although the quantity of white bass sampled was lower than the last few years, the proportion greater than 9" was the largest observed in well over 10 years. The mean length was 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". The young-of-year (under 6") fish sampled during 2009 contributed greatly to the availability of this large year class of 9-12" white bass. Unfortunately very few young of year white bass were sampled in 2011. White bass are primarily naturally recruited in Lake Maloney so they are only stocked intermittently.

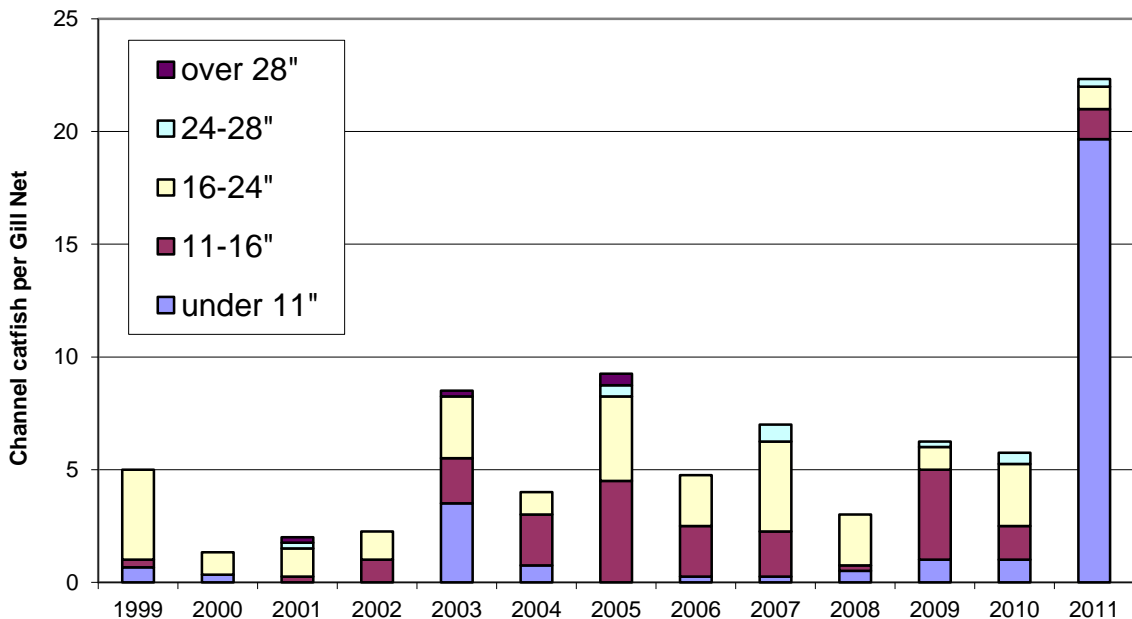


Hybrid striped bass



The hybrid striped bass population continues to decline. Stocking rates have been decreased to enable a different managing strategy that sustains a hybrid striped bass population but manages for large individuals. Stocking of hybrid striped bass did not occur in 2011 but a stocking will be requested for 2012.

Channel catfish



Nearly 23 channel catfish were sampled per gill net in 2011. The majority were less than 11" with a mean length of 9 ½". This likely indicates a large influx from the NPPD Canal System. This occurrence will hopefully lead to a large year class that will produce desirable sized catfish in coming years.

PLEASE HELP

Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Plants & Animals



Eurasian Watermilfoil



Zebra Mussel

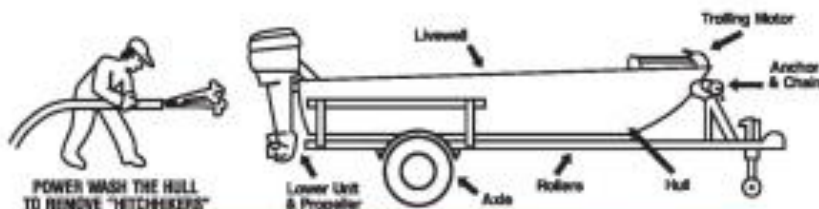


Purple Loosestrife

BEFORE launching... and BEFORE leaving:

- Remove all aquatic plant fragments and animals (away from the water body)
- Disinfect & Drain the water in the transom, bilge and livewell
- Clean off all equipment (rods, reels, water skis, scuba gear, hunting gear, etc)
- Thoroughly clean boat & equipment with high pressure or hot water OR, if possible, dry equipment for 5 days before entering new waters
- Dispose of unwanted bait in trash

WHERE TO LOOK FOR "HITCHHIKERS"



PROTECT YOUR LAKES and RIVERS for the FUTURE

For More Information Contact:

Nebraska Invasive Species Project
<http://nicr.unl.edu/invasives>

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
(903) 763-2940

